

Detroit Excellence

A Quarterly Newsletter for Employees, Volunteers and Patients of the Detroit VA Healthcare System



VA
HEALTH
CARE

Defining
EXCELLENCE
in the 21st Century

July/August/September 2013

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email:

vhadetpublicaffairs@va.gov

Detroit VA Healthcare System Hosts Successful Mental Health Summit

On August 22, 2013, nearly 200 health care professionals and community leaders gathered at the Detroit VA Healthcare System for a Mental Health Summit, "A Community of Care".

The Summit provided an opportunity for the Detroit VAMC to establish and enhance positive working relationships with community partners, and to nurture community engagement to better address the broad mental health care needs of Veterans and their families.

"This was an opportunity for all of us to sit at the same table, to listen and learn from each other," said Dr. Bella Schanzer, Associate Chief of Staff, Mental Health. "We all want the same thing— for our Detroit-area Veterans and their families to be well cared for. And, we know that they cannot receive the quality, coordinated services they need if we are not talking to each other regularly and working together."

Summit attendees participated in sessions such as, "Stopping the Revolving Door: Reducing Overuse of ED and Inpatient Services"; "Identification and Treatment of Domestic Violence"; "Screening and Treatment of Sexual Trauma" and "Treatment and Management of TBI". In total, there were 24 different topics of discussion in the breakout sessions, along with a welcome/introduction by U.S. Congressman John D. Dingell.

"We all want the same thing— for our Detroit-area Veterans and their families to be well cared for. And, we know that they cannot receive the quality, coordinated services they need if we are not talking to each other regularly and working together."

"The majority of returning Service Members and their families are resilient to the stresses of war and successfully readjust to life after deployment," said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director in Detroit. "But for those who need additional assistance, it's imperative that we come together as one community — including both public and private entities."



The Detroit VA Healthcare System's Mental Health Clinic serves 20,000 Veterans each year and has a staff of 140 mental health professionals. The Medical Center opened a new, state-of-the-art Outpatient Mental Health Clinic in January 2013. *For more on the medical center's Mental Health Service, please turn to page 7.*

Message from the Director



4th quarter of this fiscal year is wrapping up and I must congratulate all of our Detroit VAMC staff on a year of tremendous growth and phenomenal programs.

It was quite a sight in August to see literally hundreds of community leaders and mental health professionals file into our 7th floor Mental Health Unit for our first-ever Summit. Sharing resources for the good of our Veterans is a major goal of mine and the other leaders in this medical center.

It was great to host congressional staffers during the summer, for our annual Congressional Open House. We continue to keep the lines of communication wide open with these folks.

Like so many of you, I am exploring our new website and the other VA sites which were redesigned and launched during the last few months. We have many more technological advances coming your way in the coming year, and I'm excited to roll these out to both staff and patients.

Finally, the Affordable Care Act. So many of you, staff and patients, have come to us with questions. There is a page of this newsletter dedicated to the topic, and I encourage you to explore VA's website, www.va.gov/aca. Remember, IF you are enrolled in VA health care, you don't need to take additional steps to meet the health care law coverage standards! It's a good idea to familiarize yourself with the changes, and we hope we can provide you with the tools and the resources you need.

All the best, and enjoy fall, and thank you for both your service and for allowing us to manage your health care needs!

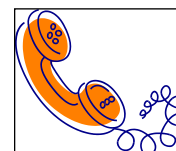
Dr. Pamela Reeves

Medical Center Director

How do I call the Detroit VA?

The Telephone Call Center here at the Detroit VAMC can assist with appointment management, prescription refills and medical questions or concerns.

Members of our call center staff are available Monday—Friday, 8:00 a.m.—4:30 p.m., 313-576-1051 or 800-511-8056.



Follow the Detroit VA Medical Center on Facebook and Twitter!



VA Begins Online Coaching for PTSD

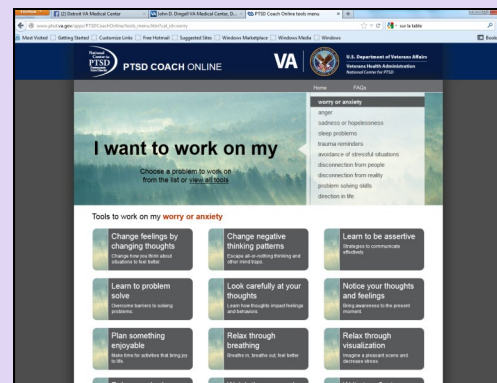
Online help for those Veterans dealing with PTSD?

Yes! With the release of PTSD Coach Online, Veterans and anyone dealing with symptoms of Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) can now go to their desktop or laptop computers anytime for help.

PTSD Coach Online extends the reach of the PTSD Coach mobile app's groundbreaking symptom management tools, plus additional helpful tools, to those who do not have access to smartphones.

"The usefulness of the PTSD Coach mobile app is underscored by the fact that it already has been downloaded well over 100,000 times," said Dr. Matthew J. Friedman, Executive Director of the National Center for PTSD, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. "With the release of PTSD Coach Online, we are ensuring that everyone who can access the Internet will have its valuable tools available to them and that no one will get left behind."

PTSD Coach Online can be accessed at: www.ptsd.va.gov/apps/PTSDCoachOnline/default.htm.



What is ACA and How Does it Affect our Veterans?

The phrase, "It's Here!" is an appropriate one when we speak of the Affordable Care Act (ACA), more than three years after the U.S. Congress passed it and President Barack Obama approved it.

How will it affect Veterans?

A few key points to remember:

- VA wants all Veterans to get health care that improves their health and well being.
- If you are enrolled in VA health care, you don't need to take additional steps to meet the health care law coverage standards.
- The health care law does not change VA health benefits or Veterans' out of pocket costs.
- If you are not enrolled in VA health care, you can apply at any time.

Veterans can apply for VA health care by visiting www.va.gov/healthbenefits/enroll, calling 1-877-222-VETS (8387), or visiting their local VA health care facility. Full details on eligibility are available at www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book

The Affordable Care Act was created to expand access to coverage, reduce rising health care costs, and improve health care quality and care coordination. The Affordable Care Act creates new opportunities for coverage for uninsured Veterans and their families.

There are more than 1.3 million Veterans and more than 950,000 spouses and children of Veterans without health insurance. Most uninsured Veterans are eligible for VA health care. For those who are not eligible for VA care – such as Veterans' family members – the law created a new Health Insurance Marketplace.

For information about VA health care and the Affordable Care Act, VA encourages Veterans and family members to visit the new website at www.va.gov/aca, or call **1-877-222-VETS (8387)**, Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. or Saturdays from 11a.m. to 3 p.m., Eastern time. The new website includes a Health Benefits Explorer, where Veterans can learn about the benefits they can receive if they enroll in VA care.

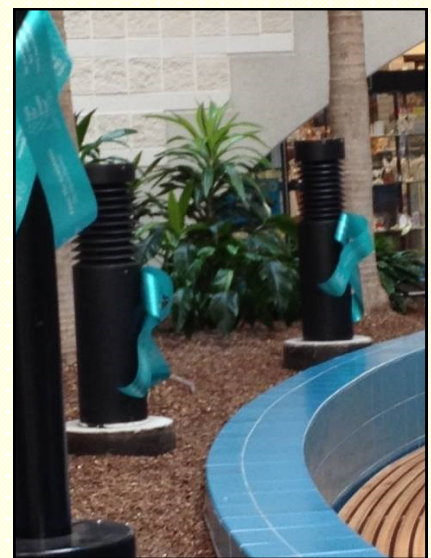
Affordable Care Act Information Corner

- Website: www.va.gov/aca
- Toll free hotline for answers on ACA questions: 1-877-222-VETS (8387)

Detroit VAMC contacts:

- Paul Miller, Patient Advocate, 313-576-3666 or Paul.Miller4@va.gov
- Katherine Moore 313-576-4718 or Katherine.moore2@va.gov
- Ken Hill, Supervisor, HBA, 313-576-3633 or Kenneth.hill4@va.gov
- Cheryl Best, Chief, HBA, 313-576-3489 or Cheryl.best@va.gov





***Thank you Veterans,
for a great Summer!***

New VA Website Focuses on YOU!

The Department of Veterans Affairs has just completed a major web redesign project that officials say will better serve America's Veterans. The first phase of the project was a new design for the VA

website, which rolled out on Veterans Day, November 11, 2012.

In addition to making the public site more visually appealing, changing the site's look and feel, the goals are to incorporate web best practices and focus on topics which are important to Veterans and their families.

More than 500 VA websites and some 80,000 pages were affected by the change, including Detroit! Our web address is www.detroit.va.gov. Check it out!



New Network Director Visits Detroit VAMC

In late August, Detroit was pleased to host Paul Bockelman, VISN 11 Director. Mr. Bockelman was appointed Network Director of VA Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 11 by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, effective June 16, 2013.

"It was nice to meet with him and show him the medical center; our new programs and services such as the eye clinic and outpatient mental health service, along with the programs that will soon be expanded and improved, such as our emergency department," said Dr. Pamela Reeves, Medical Center Director.

Right: L to R, Detroit VAMC Chief of Staff, Dr. Scott Gruber, Chief of Clinical Operations Michelle Werner, Associate Director, Annette Walker, VISN 11 Director, Paul Bockelman, Medical Center Director, Dr. Pamela Reeves, Executive Assistant to the Network Director, Crystal Lindsey.



Detroit VA Healthcare System Employees of the Month



July: **Jacqueline Weisman**

Jackie has more than 34 years of combined service at the VA Medical Center and is currently the Secretary to the Chief of Staff. She also serves as President of the VA Employee Association. Jackie took this role to help improve employee morale with year round events and activities which in turn, leads to better customer service for our Veterans.

According to fellow employees, she is always willing to help when needed to make sure the Detroit VA Medical Healthcare System is the hospital of choice for Veterans!

August: **Christinie Peterson**

Christinie has been with the VA Medical Center since June 3, 2012 and currently serves as the Triage Nurse in the Telephone Call Center. Her service has been exceptional and fellow employees wanted to recognize her work.

She recently handled an urgent case involving an off-site social worker who needed assistance when visiting a Veteran at home. She also was recognized by a Veteran for her kindness when answering the crisis line.



September: **Nancy Kaatz**

Nancy has been with the VA Medical Center since January 9, 2005 and is currently a Nurse Practitioner in the Community Living Center. Nancy cares for Veterans in A6S.

The uncle of an employee resided on A6S and Nancy exhibited a caring and respectful manner during his time as a resident. This gentleman began to accept and enjoy his new surroundings as he appreciated Nancy's concern for him. She would always enter the room with a positive remark to make him smile and he loved to joke around with staff!

According to other staff, Nancy made him feel special as her kindness and attentiveness won him over. One employee said, "We could see her dedication and love for all the residents on that unit". The family believes that through her kindness and caring attitude, she made the difficult time in his life of leaving his home to living in the Nursing Home very smooth!.



E-Donate...A Simple, Secure and Speedy Way to Help Detroit VAMC Veterans

E-Donate is now available!

What is E-Donate? It's an online donation option that will provide those in the community who wish to give back to Veterans here at the Detroit VAMC, a simple and safe way to pledge their support to the fund of their choice.

"Donated money at our medical center goes to areas such as Healthcare for Homeless Veterans and OEF-OIF-OND Assistance for returning Veterans," said William Browning, Chief of Volunteer and Community Relations, Detroit VA Healthcare System. "People would be amazed if they could see how far their dollar goes toward making a difference in the lives of the people who dedicated themselves to us first."

Donors can find the E-Donate button at www.detroit.va.gov. The actual donation is made through a secure site at the Department of Treasury's www.pay.gov. A minimum of \$5 is required for online donation.



Focus On...Mental Health Service: *Excellence in Care for Veterans*

The Mental Health Service at the Detroit VA Healthcare System strives to provide compassionate, evidence-based, high quality mental health care to all Veterans encompassing the full range of psychiatric disorders and psychosocial stressors. We provide multidisciplinary consultation, evaluation, and treatment for difficulties with mood and anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder, schizophrenia, substance use disorders as well as provide a full array of services for Veterans who are homeless or have other significant psychosocial problems.



We are also a prominent teaching site for the Wayne State University School of Medicine and the Wayne SOM Department of Psychiatry and Neurobiology. We train medical students, psychiatry residents, psychology and social work interns, nurse practitioner and physician assistant students as well as nursing students. We were recently awarded a highly prestigious training grant that allowed us to increase the number of psychia-

try residents and psychology interns in our outpatient department.

Our services are provided through a number of different sections and programs, including but not limited to the following:

- Acute Psychiatric Services
- Primary Care-Mental Health Integration: Mental Health Intake Service
- General Mental Health Clinic
- Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Service
- PTSD Clinical Team
- PRRC (The Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Recovery Center)
- CWT: Compensate Work Therapy
- Neuropsychology/Diagnostics
- Homeless Program: The Detroit VAMC has one of the largest homeless programs in VISN 11. It encompasses a number of programs from Healthcare for Homeless Veterans and a Veterans Community Resource and Referral Center (VCRRC) to HUD-VASH
- Mental Health Residential Recovery Treatment Program (MH RRTP)
- Military Sexual Trauma: Location of Service in Medical Center:

The Mental Health Clinic is located on the 7th Floor in the Blue Tower. For more information, visit www.detroit.va.gov.

INSTANCES OF EXCELLENCE

The "Instance of Excellence" program stems from a belief that employees must do the right thing, the first time, every time. Our program establishes a system of recognizing and celebrating those Instances of Excellence in the hope of fostering a culture that is dedicated to excellence in customer service and patient care. Detroit VAMC Leadership Academy, September 2013

"Everyone was friendly + helpful. Not just to me, but everyone was given a smile and a welcome. People everywhere smiled and offered help."

"LaTonya Tolbert/VA Dom-Helps Veterans with concerns has compassion for residents, always friendly & courteous."

"My experiences have always been great! Smooth, with friendly and courteous staff, medical and non-medical – keep up the great work!!"

"Darlene Goodrich/Dom-Constant, caring, respecting, knowledge, administration without Darlene at the Dom, many of us wouldn't be here."

***Look for more comments from our Veterans in the Instances of Excellence Newsletter, now published quarterly.*



Detroit VA Healthcare System Employees Generously "Feed Families" in Detroit Area

Great job Detroit VA Healthcare System staff!

Through the **Feds Feed Families** campaign, held throughout the summer, Detroit VA Healthcare System staff raised 713 pounds of food for Gleaners Community Food Bank in SE Michigan.

This generous donation will provide 592 meals for our hungry neighbors in need.

"We are proud of our great employees...for their kindness and generosity," said William Browning, Chief of Volunteer and Community Relations. "Our employees recognize the needs both here in our medical center and in the community, and they always step up to the plate to give."

Fed Feed Families is held each year throughout the Federal Government. The program encourages employees from all agencies to donate to their local food banks.

Photos: Top: A Gleaners official filled his van with Detroit VA Healthcare System employee donations!

Left: Fiscal staff held a food drive on their own, donating a basket full of non-perishable food!

